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Electrical Engineering Alumna Mary (McCord) Peery Shares Story

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Mary (McCord) Peery, 1984 electrical engineering alumna

The year was 1984. Resident undergraduate tuition charges for one academic year at Colorado State University totaled \$1008 per person. Colorado State established its first endowed professorship to provide leadership in computer-assisted engineering. And after a long journey of juggling part-time school with full-time family obligations, Mrs. Mary (McCord) Peery graduated with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.

It Wasn't Easy

Peery notes that her time at CSU was difficult. "I went back to school very part-time as I was raising my family, and I didn't receive my degree until I was 34 years old. The learning did not come easy and it was difficult juggling a family with small children, working part-time, and going to school," she states. "Many times it didn't feel like it was worth it and I came close to quitting several times."

But the time commitment, the energy output, and the dedication to a dream were worth it. "I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to receive my

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education because it has opened doors far beyond my wildest expectations," states Peery. "My education at CSU was the foundation for those opportunities. I encourage CSU engineering students to hang in there and get as much as you can out of your education. What you do with it is up to you but it truly is the foundation for opening doors of opportunity."

A Successful Career

Following graduation, Peery went to work for Hewlett Packard as an R&D Engineer. During her 20 years with Hewlett Packard she had the opportunity to work on many leading edge technology programs in the storage, printing and digital imaging areas, working primarily in R&D and manufacturing/supply chain until she was named General Manager in 1998. Prior to her retirement in 2004, she served as a Senior Vice President leading Hewlett Packard's world-wide Digital Imaging and Publishing organization. This included scanners, digital cameras, photo printers, commercial digital publishing printers and the solutions that tie these products together for the use of consumer, commercial and enterprise customers.

During her time with Hewlett Packard, Peery also had the opportunity to become very involved in the company's diversity efforts. She helped start Safe Space for HP, she was a member of the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Board, and was the executive sponsor for the Colorado GLBT group.

Words of Wisdom

When asked what advice she would like to share with CSU engineering students who are preparing to enter the workforce, Peery stated, "Learn how to perform as part of a team. The ability to contribute as a team member as well as an individual is essential to your success. Almost everything you will do in the 'real world' will be as part of a team. It is essential that you learn how to collaborate, look at the bigger picture and work towards the success of the team/project/company as well as your own success."

Giving Back

Peery retired from HP in 2004 and is now spending her time with her husband, Dennis (ECE '71) and their family (six children and 15 grandchildren in their blended family.) She is also a member of the Board of Directors for Larimer County Hospice, a leader for the youth group at her church, consults as an executive coach, and spends time enjoying beautiful Colorado.

"I feel strongly that it is essential that we attract the top students to our College of Engineering and that we give them the best education they can receive to prepare them for their careers," stated Peery, when asked what motivated her to make a financial donation to the College of Engineering. "Education is the foundation for what they will build their careers on. Donations from alumni are an essential part of this."

Encouraging Others

Peery encourages current students and alumni to financially support the college, its departments, or its programs at some level. "We need to help ensure that CSU's College of Engineering stays very competitive in providing the best education available for our students."

If you are interested in supporting our mission by making a gift, please visit <https://advancing.colostate.edu/ENG/GIVE>. If you have any questions, please contact the College of Engineering Development Office at (970) 491-7028 or SupportEngineering@colostate.edu.

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